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27 July 1953

EYES ONLY

MEMORANDUM FOR: INSPECTOR GENERAL

SUBJECT : Personnel Office

REFERENCE : Memorandum for Chief, Technical Services Staff,
from the Inspector General, dated 1 July 1953,
subject: same as above

1. Replying to the direct question in the last sentence of paragraph 1 of the reference, so far as I know the Personnel Office is furnishing the services which it is formally supposed to furnish under the existing set-up. I assume, however, from the remainder of this paragraph that you may be interested in a somewhat more generalized comment.

2. As a beginning, may I state that apart from military service in World War I, my entire career has been spent with a large industrial organization. I notice great differences between the mode of handling personnel in Government and in business, and the differences are practically all in favor of business. I think the reason for this is quite simple: wise handling of personnel in a private corporation is essential to its survival. While industry has basic policies to provide fair treatment, the enforcement of these policies is done in such a way that the "command" relationship between supervisor and subordinate is not appreciably weakened. The employee knows that his chief will have a profound influence on his career - the supervisor in turn may not blame the shortcomings of his group on the quality of his staff. Great emphasis, of course, is placed on early recognition of ability and on development of ability, and this is one of the important duties of the supervisor. A strong feeling of responsibility for his personnel is built up in the mind of the supervisor, from the lowest to the highest.

3. The development of personnel handling in Government has resulted in a great number of rules and regulations which seem to me to be designed to secure two ends: (a) the protection of the Government against the employee; and (b) the guarantee of fair treatment to the employee. The desirability of both ends is unquestioned, but the means adopted to attain

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them are massive and complicated and have produced some undesirable results which tend to defeat the achievement of other ends of a different kind of importance, such as (c) securing and retaining in Government service persons of high calibre, and (d) identifying and developing those persons in the service who have a real capacity for greater things, either as leaders, or as highly talented individual workers. This is not because the importance of (c) and (d) are not recognized, but because the system is inconsistent with their attainment. The command relationship of the supervisor is highly diluted because so much of the personnel action is centralized, and is, therefore, in the hands of persons, boards, etc., who are not directly responsible for the work to be performed. Discipline is weakened, and there may also be an impairment in the integrity of personnel relations.

4. I suspect a substantial amount of the foregoing applies to the Agency. Although the statutes relating to CIA give unusual powers as regards personnel, it appears that the Civil Service system is followed closely.

5. The Agency, personnel-wise, is smaller than some other Government agencies, and much smaller than many private concerns. It has an important and peculiar mission which calls for men and women of unusual ability, and preferably with good experience in the work of the Agency. It seems to me that the Government interests and the minimum right of employees could both be preserved, and the other advantages (items (c) and (d) above) obtained, by placing most of the personnel responsibility and authority on those who are supposed to exercise command over the personnel. This decentralization would permit the Personnel Office to devote most of its attention to positive work, such as policy guidance, ~~on~~ employee relations, etc. Furthermore, each required action should be studied to see whether it contributes anything useful in each case, or whether it is either useless, or at best, only useful in an extremely low percentage of cases. If the latter is true, it would probably be better for all concerned to set up some simpler mechanism. It is often futile to attempt to improve a system by adding to it.

6. The present system of rigid T/O's and slots seems remarkably cumbersome and inflexible for an organization whose work seems to demand flexibility, and I should think that a better scheme could be adopted.

7. It is difficult to recruit good men, difficult to hold them, and extremely difficult to get rid of misfits, etc. The result of all of this is not good. Our system should be made more elastic and more human.

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Security Information

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Personnel administration is too mechanistic, too professional, and tends to concentrate on form and procedure rather than content.

8. The following persons in TSS have a formally assigned responsibility for handling personnel matters:

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, Personnel Officer, GS-13
Personnel Officer, GS-7
k-Stenographer, GS-4

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9. In addition, the Research Chairman, [REDACTED]; the Chief, TSS; Deputy Chief, TSS; Executive Secretary, Research Board; as well as all Division Chiefs spend a considerable amount of their time on such matters - as in my opinion they should under any system.



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Chief, DD/P/TSS

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